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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Florida Disabled Outdoors Association Honors  
Miami Dade Parks Disability Services**

Tallahassee, FL (May 7, 2013) – The Florida Disabled Outdoors Association (FDOA) honored **Miami Dade Parks Recreation and Open Spaces Department - Parks Disability Services** with the 2013 Active Leisure for Life Award. The award recognizes organizations that provide opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in inclusive accessible recreation.

In Miami Dade, people with disabilities are playing soccer, basketball, baseball, tennis, and goalball. They are participating in archery, kayaking, swimming, handcycling, bowling and track and field. They have afterschool and winter, spring and summer break camps at seven different sites. "Each person with or without a disability is different and is motivated to be active by different activities, so we try to make sure that there is something to interest everyone," stated Lucy Binhack, Miami Dade Parks Disability Services Manager.

"Their facilities are welcoming and accessible with accessible golf carts at their golf courses, pool lifts at their pools and beach wheelchairs at their beaches. More importantly, the staff strives to make sure that each person can participate and receive the health and wellness benefits of recreation. They truly demonstrate that EVERYONE deserves the opportunity to recreate," stated Laurie LoRe-Gussak, FDOA Executive Director.

In 1991, Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department established its Leisure Access Services to promote the involvement of persons with disabilities throughout all park services. The program, which is supported by the Leisure Access Foundation, has had total registration for people with disabilities of 1,100 and total attendance of 41,136 in the past year. In a time when many recreation departments have cut therapeutic recreation, they currently employ four Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists trained to teach, organize, and promote recreation and sports programs for persons with disabilities. They are assisted by approximately 35 part time employees, as well as interns and volunteers.

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**Florida Disabled Outdoors Association** works to enrich lives through accessible inclusive recreation for all. FDOA was formed in 1990 as a result of David Jones' experience utilizing recreation to get back to living after he was shot in a hunting accident. In the process of his rehabilitation, he became aware of the importance of recreation for rehabilitation – not only to improve mobility, but to improve mental well-being. The Florida Disabled Outdoors Association has grown since that point to have multiple programs including, the Recreation Activity Program for Adults with Disabilities, ALLOUT Adventure Program, Miracle Sports, Community-Based Therapeutic Recreation for People with a Brain or Spinal Cord Injury and SportsAbility.

For more information, please contact the FDOA at (850) 201-2944 or [info@fdoa.org](mailto:info@fdoa.org) or visit [www.fdoa.org](http://www.fdoa.org).

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